

**Opening Statement of Chairman Bob Latta**  
**“Built in America: Jobs and Growth in the Manufacturing Sector”**  
**Subcommittee on Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection**  
**September 26, 2018**

*(As prepared for delivery)*

Good morning, I'd like to welcome everyone to the Digital Commerce and Consumer Protection Subcommittee's examination of the State of Manufacturing in America.

Thanks to policies designed to spur manufacturing in our country we are seeing a revival of the Made in America brand. Factories are expanding, workers are being re-hired and wages are rising. A recent survey of small business owners found optimism at an all-time high. Small businesses are responsible for creating 2 out of every 3 new jobs so when they are raising wages, growing their businesses, and investing in equipment, it's helpful to the entire economy<sup>1</sup>.

In my own congressional district, the 5<sup>th</sup> District of Ohio, we are definitely seeing a resurgence of optimism. My district stretches from densely populated urban centers like downtown Toledo to small villages on the state-line of Indiana and we proudly have over 60,000 manufacturing jobs. In the over 900 district meetings I've had since August 2012, overregulation is the most mentioned issue. I never hear that regulation isn't necessary, but I always hear people ask for soft-touch, minimal regulation. It is burdensome for businesses to navigate regulatory regimes when they are busy improving operations and products for customers or working to grow to reach more people. Through policies this Congress and Administration have advanced, we are witnessing the rebirth of a healthy, strong and growing manufacturing sector. This includes one of our witnesses today, who comes to us representing Jerl Marchine Inc. from Perrysburg. Welcome Ms. Moyers, and thank you very much for joining us today, I look forward to hearing from you and our other witnesses today.

According to the Congressional Research Service, the U.S. is the world's second-largest manufacturing nation, having been over-taken by China in 2010. But the competition to regain the crown is very much alive. In recent years American manufacturing output has risen steadily, this year reaching its highest level in nearly 10 years.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/09/11/small-business-optimism-surges-to-highest-ever.html>

Growing production also means growing jobs. Since January 2017, over 350,000 manufacturing jobs have been created in America; this is a sharp reversal over the previous two years, when the Bureau of Labor Statistics was regularly reporting job losses.

The increasing demand for workers is creating new opportunities across our country. Importantly, for the first time in a long time prosperity and opportunity are reaching into rural areas that have long been left-out of recovery.

As a recent report by the Brookings Institute notes, the growth of the employment rate in small and rural communities has outpaced that of big cities and other larger metro areas. A large part of this success is due to the return of manufacturing jobs.

Restoring America's manufacturing sector has been a priority of this Congress. Tax reform, focused on lowering the burdens employers face in order to spur production and job creation, has helped fuel the manufacturing boom.

Perhaps that's why the National Association of Manufacturer's Outlook Survey reported an all-time high in manufacturer optimism for the second quarter of this year. They also reported record or near record highs when it came to their expectations about hiring workers, raising wages and making investments.

Our manufacturers know that opportunity is greater now than it has been in many years.

I look forward to hearing more about these trends from our witnesses, as well as any ideas you have for how policymakers can remove barriers and further promote manufacturing in America. We are grateful for your time today and appreciate your testimony.